the Alapra and Karikattur Reserves in the Manimala pakuthi. These are long established reserves and abound in teak and blackwood and other valuable trees which are of so much value to the State that it is impossible to have those lands disafforested.

You also wish that the reserves to the south of the Azhutha river be disafforested and thrown open to occupation—you mean apparently Ranni Reserve. This too is an extremely valuable reserve of many years standing and growth—valuable not merely because it supplies the Forest Department with a steady source of income to supplement the general revenues of the State. There is also another reason. This is high country where many streams and rivers take their source and if that area is disafforested and thrown open to cultivation it will mean felling off all timber with the result that the soil will not hold sufficient water to feed the streams. You will have all sorts of cataclysms such as erosions and sudden floods and the usual thing which follows in a country where there is heavy rain and the water cannot be conserved and distributed in a proper way. Therefore it is impossible to throw this area for occupation.

14. Forest Department.

MR. THOMMAN JOSEPH (*Member, Todupuzha taluk*) said that unemployment and poverty were growing in the country along with the growth of population. It was highly necessary therefore that Government should apply themselves to relieving the situation. Industrialisation of the country would not be a right step in this direction. The majority of the people had no money to invest in industries. Nor could Travancore compete successfully with other countries in the quality of her industrial products. As for agriculture, the Agricultural Department had tried in vain to improve the productive capacity of the country. But the people were eager more and more to take to agriculture. As the Dewan said the other day in the Assembly the demand for land was greater than the supply and people not only accepted with eagerness every inch of land granted to them but clamoured for more. It was a pity that in such a country where agriculture had unmistakably proved to be the mainstay of the population, and where the demand for land was steadily on the increase, no less than a third of the total area was reserved as State forests. Government would themselves concede that parts of these reserve lands were once under cultivation and that they were subsequently added on to the reserve forests. If at the back of this action of Government there was only consideration of forest revenue, then Government could easily see that the same lands if cultivated would yield ten times as much revenue. If, on the other hand, Government maintained these forests for reasons of rainfall, it could be seen that the theory of the influence of forests on rainfall had not been finally proved and that there was no consensus of opinion among scientists on this point. At any rate the member did not want that the tops of hills or the extreme highlands should be thrown open for private occupation. His request on the other hand was only in

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respect of the reserved lands fit for cultivation which were situated near inhabited areas. A portion of these lands to the extent of one furlong from the existing homesteads need alone be registered for cultivation.

Another request was in regard to the low-lying fields inside the reserve forests. Time was when Travancore had paddy enough to export after her own use. But at the present time paddy and rice to the value of Rs. 7 per head had to be imported into the State per annum. It was dangerous and derogatory to the prestige of the country to depend thus upon other countries for food materials. In order to extend the area of paddy cultivation, Government had indeed taken some steps such as the formation of a committee for the registry of swampy areas in reserve forests, but much still remained to be done. In the Todupuzha taluk itself there were several pieces of paddy fields, measuring in all about 1000 acres situated in reserve No. 23 in the Neriamangalam range. These fields were for a very long time past being cultivated and enjoyed by the people. But the surrounding dry lands which they were using for their habitations as well as for the breeding of their cattle were resumed by the Sirkar on the ground that they were not registered and they were added on to the reserve forests. The people were thus put to great inconvenience in the protection of their crops and in the breeding of their cattle. Occasions were common on which, in spite of the utmost vigilance on the part of the poor ryots, wild elephants got into the fields and destroyed the crops in a single night. The people of Todupuzha had time and again brought these facts to the notice of Government, but Government turned only a deaf ear to their loudest cries. It would therefore be a great relief to these people if the dry lands immediately bordering on the paddy fields in reserve No. 23 in the Neriamangalam range were registered to them so that they might settle down there and look after their crops.

Another request which the member had to make was in regard to the lands in S. No. 1471/1 and 1463/1 in the Todupuzha reserve (No.23) and S. No. 1382/B in the Tencott reserve, which he suggested should be disafforested and granted for cultivation in small blocks.

His last request was for the establishment of a timber depot near the Todupuzha town. With the influx of people from outside, the demand for timber in the place was growing daily. Under present conditions, if they wanted timber they had to go to the depots far off and very often to tow the logs against the current of the Todupuzha river up to their residences. This was a very troublesome and expensive task. It would therefore be a great advantage if a timber depot was established on the Pulikal river.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Thomman Joseph, your first request is for the disafforestation of forests lying adjacent to registered holdings to the extent of one furlong. Due allowance is made by the Forest Department now in allowing the registry of a certain stretch of forest adjoining

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registered lands as the merits of each case require for the beneficial enjoyment of the registered holdings. But it is not possible to lay down hard and fast rules that precisely one furlong, neither more nor less, should be allowed in each case. The Forest Department, as I told you before, will deal with each such case on its merits.

Then you ask for three forest reserves to be forthwith disafforested. In respect of one of these, you made the same representation two years ago and received a polite *non-possumus* at the hands of Government. I should like to repeat it again, if possible more politely.

Then you speak about the establishment of a timber depot in the Todupuzha town. The Conservator is anxious to take up at once the examination of the question as to the desirability and feasibility of establishing a timber depot in the neighbourhood you advocate.

MEMBER: The disafforestation of these reserves will be necessary as wild elephants and pigs are doing havoc.

DEWAN: I shall ask the District Magistrate to consider sympathetically an application from you to keep fire-arms so that you may meet some of the troubles you get from wild pig and other animals.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 2-5 P. M. and re-assembled at 3 P. M.

15. Hardships caused to the public owing to the present constitution and working of the civil courts and the means of remedying them.

MR. KANDA KURUP KALI KURUP (*Member, Chirayinkil taluk, Group I*) said that the public were put to great inconvenience on account of irregularities in the working of civil courts. In the first place, there were the extortions of the Amins and the peons in the execution of decrees. Strict supervision by the superior officers was the proper remedy for this. Every instance of misconduct on the part of an Amin or a peon should be taken note of in a register kept for the purpose. The register should be examined once a month by the local officer and as often as possible by the superior officers on inspection. Process peons and Amins should also be transferred once in three years. In the matter of confirming these subordinates also some discrimination should be made. Only such persons as had proved good character should be given permanent posts. In this connection, the member illustrated the high-handedness of some Amins by referring to an instance (C. 193 of 103 on the file of the Attingal Munsiff's Court) in which an Amin issued summons to a person without the order of the court.

Secondly, the member had to complain about the delay in the delivery of judgments by Munsiffs. As a remedy for this, he suggested that monthly statements should be obtained by the High Court from each Munsiff, showing the number of cases in which final hearing was over, but in which judgments had not been delivered. On examination of these statements every instance of delay, unless due to sufficient reasons, should be taken severe notice of.

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